

Application No. 10/810,465
Attorney Docket No. RP-001-US
Response to Office Action dated June 2, 2005
Page 5 of 6

REMARKS

Examiner Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the telephonic interview conducted on July 21, 2005. During the interview, the Quintero reference was discussed in relationship to claim 1 of the present invention. While no agreement was reached, the Examiner expressed his understanding of the scope of claim 1. The amendments to claims 1 and 9 are presented in response to that understanding.

Summary

Claims 1-18 are pending in the present application. Claims 2-8 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, as being indefinite. Claims 1-12 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and/or 103. In particular, claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Quintero et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,792,893 B1). Claims 3-5, 8, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Quintero. Claims 13-16 and 18 are allowed.

By this amendment, claims 1 and 9 are amended. In particular, claims 1 is amended to correct the lack of antecedent basis. Accordingly, Applicant submits claims 1-12 and 17 are allowable under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2. Additionally, claims 1 and 9 are amended to better distinguish the claims over the Quintero reference.

Overview of Quintero

Quintero teaches a variation on the well-known retractable dog leash where the retraction mechanism is located in the leash handle. This type of leash is shown as prior art in figure 6 of Quintero. Quintero teaches the adaptation of the typical retractable leash for use for two pets. (Quintero at col. 4, lines 10-24) As shown in figure 1 of Quintero, there are two leash cords 12A and 12B for connecting to two different pets. Leash cord 12A is for "animal #1" and leash cord 12B is for "animal #2." (Quintero at col. 3, lines 22-23) Indeed, there are essentially two of every component – one for each animal. (Quintero at col. 3, line 19 to col. 4, line 7)

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103

Claims 1 and 9 are amended to recite that the "retraction members directly mounted on the outer side of the restraint" and "the means for retracting is directly mounted on the upper side of the means for restraining," respectively. In contrast, the spool assembly 24A for animal #1 and the spool assembly 24B for animal #2 of Quintero are mounted in housing 14 (i.e., the

Application No. 10/810,465
Attorney Docket No. RP-001-US
Response to Office Action dated June 2, 2005
Page 6 of 6

handle) rather than on the collar of either animal #1 or animal #2.

Additionally, as recited in claim 1 for example, both the first and second flexible retraction members are mounted on the restraint. Thus, there are two retraction members for a single restraint, which means two retraction members for only one animal. In contrast, in Quintero the spool assembly 24A is for animal #1 and the spool assembly 24B is for animal #2, rather than a single animal.

While other distinctions exist claims 1 and 9, as well as the dependent claims, Applicant respectfully submits that the distinctions noted above are sufficient to overcome the prior art rejections of all presently rejected claims.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are allowable, and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application; the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,

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